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DALAND'S DEPARTURE.

The Flying Dutchman

(Der Fliegende Holländer)

A · DRAMATIC · POEM · BY · RICHARD
WAGNER · FREELY · TRANSLATED · IN
POETIC · NARRATIVE · FORM · BY

Oliver Huckel



Thomas B. Crowell Company

PUBLISHERS · NEW YORK

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	Page ix
----------	---------

PART I

The Phantom Ship	3
------------------	---

PART II

A Woman's Love	17
----------------	----

PART III

The Troth of Death	39
--------------------	----

ILLUSTRATIONS

Daland's Departure	Frontispiece
Senta at the Spinning-wheel	Facing page 18
The Death of Senta	53

FOREWORD



AGNER had written two acts of his *Rienzi*,—his imagination was on fire,—and he resolved to go to Paris and storm the Grand Opera, feeling sure that something must come of it. He set sail in a small vessel from Pillau on the Baltic with his young wife and a great dog. They were blown about the Baltic for three weeks in a terrific storm, and put into a desolate Norwegian harbor for shelter. On that tempestuous voyage there came to its fulness of conception the theme of *The Flying Dutchman*, of which he was already thinking. He wrote: "Three times we suffered from the effect of heavy storms. The passage through the Narrows made a wondrous impression on my fancy. The legend of *The Flying Dutchman* was confirmed by the sailors, and the circumstances gave it a distinct and characteristic color in my mind."

The legend is an old one, much older than the story which those daring Dutch navigators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had somehow made their own. It is a mediaeval version of Ulysses, "the unresting traveller, yearning for home and domestic joys." It is a maritime version of Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, "accursed and hopeless of all save the end in oblivion." The *Kundry* of Parsifal, who came later, is another variation of the theme of one condemned to perpetual wandering and weary existence.

But the Dutch, who were masters of the sea and to whom the water was a favorite element,

Fore- word

adopted the venerable legend which seemed to them to embody "forever the avenging vision of men who, resolved to win, had so often dared and lost all." It was typical "of their own battles with the powers of old ocean, and their determination to conquer at all hazards." Wagner was first interested in the legend as he read it in Heine's story, *The Memoirs of Herr von Schnabelewopski*. Wagner makes a note, — he was a young musician at Riga at the time, — as follows: "Heine takes occasion to relate the story in speaking of the representation of a play founded thereon which he had witnessed, as I believe, at Amsterdam. This subject fascinated me, and made an indelible impression upon my fancy; still, it did not as yet acquire the force needful for its rebirth within me." But the force needful for the rebirth evidently came in that stormy voyage on the Baltic.

An early version of the legend was printed in *Blackwood's Magazine* for May, 1821, and is supposed to be the source from which came the play to which Heine refers. It ran thus: "She was an Amsterdam vessel and sailed from port seventy years ago. Her master's name was Van der Decken. He was a staunch seaman, and would have his own way in spite of the devil. For all that, never a sailor under him had reason to complain; though how it is on board with them nobody knows. The story is this: that in doubling the Cape they were a long day trying to weather Table Bay. However, the wind headed them and went against them more and more, and Van der Decken walked the deck,

swearing at the wind. Just after sunset a vessel spoke him, asking him if he did not mean to go into the Bay that night. Van der Decken replied: 'May I be eternally damned if I don't, though I should beat about here till the Day of Judgment.' And to be sure he never did go into that Bay, for it is believed that he continues to beat about in these seas still, and will do so long enough. This vessel is never seen but with foul weather along with her."

This story reminds us of an American legend of the Hudson, related by Washington Irving in his early tales of the Dutch in New Amsterdam, of which legend there is still a reminder in Spuyten Duyvil Creek. It also brings Coleridge's Ancient Mariner to mind. That mariner is under a curse and must "pass like night from land to land." Recall the description of his vessel:

"'Strange, by my faith,' the Hermit said —
'And they answer'd not our cheer!
The planks look warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them
Unless perchance it were
Brown skeletons of leaves.'"

Wilhelm Hauff has also told a weird tale of the phantom ship "Carmilhan," in which the doomed seafarers sing a most sad and weary song, like that in *The Flying Dutchman*. The story closes with the words: "The whole procession marched away in the same order in which it had come, and with the same solemn

**Fore-
word**

song, which grew fainter and fainter in the distance, until finally it was lost in the roar of the breakers."

Although Wagner obtained the germ of the story from Heine, yet he gave it a distinct and splendid mintage of his own. This is what it meant to him. He writes: "The figure of The Flying Dutchman is a mythical creation of the folk. A primal trait of human nature speaks out from it with a heart-enthraling force. This trait in its most universal meaning is the longing for rest after the storms of life. The sea in its turn became the soil of life; yet no longer the land-locked sea of the Grecian world, but the great ocean that engirdles the earth. The fetters of the older world were broken; the longing of Ulysses for home and hearth and wedded life, until it became a yearning for death, had mounted to the craving for a new and unknown home, invisible as yet, but dimly boded. This broader feature fronts us in the mythos of The Flying Dutchman, that seaman's poem of the world-historical age of journeys of discovery. Here we light upon a remarkable mixture, a blend effected by the spirit of the folk, of the character of Ulysses with that of the Wandering Jew. The Hollandic mariner, in punishment for his temerity, is condemned by the Devil (here obviously the element of flood and storm) to do battle with the unresting waves to all eternity. Like Ahasuerus, he yearns for his sufferings to be ended by death. The Dutchman, however, may gain this redemption, denied to the undying Jew, at the hands of a woman who

of very love shall sacrifice herself for him. The yearning for death thus spurs him on to seek this woman; but she is no longer the home-tending Penelope of Ulysses, as courted in the days of old, but the quintessence of Woman-kind; and yet the still unmanifest, the longed-for, the dreamt-of, the infinitely womanly, — let me out with it in one word, — ‘The Woman of the Future.’”

Wagner wrote his poem of The Flying Dutchman in a libretto sketch and offered it to the director of the Paris Opera, who liked it, had it translated into French, and then coolly gave it to another composer to set to music, who did so in a manner which caused it to fail completely when it was produced. But meanwhile Wagner himself had been working on it, and in the spring of 1841 he moved to a cottage at Meudon, near Paris, and here in seven weeks he completed the poem and the music of the whole opera except the overture. It was a great joy to him to find that he could thus produce even in the midst of his troubles. Here is a bit of his autobiography on this point: “I had now to work post-haste to clothe my own subject with German verses. In order to set about its composition I required to hire a piano-forte; for, after nine months’ interruption of all musical production, I had to try to surround myself with the needful preliminary of a musical atmosphere. As soon as the piano had arrived, my heart beat fast for very fear; I dreaded to discover that I had ceased to be a musician. I began first with the Sailors’ Chorus and the

**Fore-
word** Spinning Song. Everything sped along as on wings, and I shouted for joy as I felt within me that I was still a musician."

But neither of these new operas, *Rienzi* nor *The Flying Dutchman*, was acceptable to Paris. The Grand Opera would have nothing to do with them. So Wagner despatched his scores to Germany. Munich and Leipzig both declined the new work as "unfit for Germany." But finally Dresden accepted *Rienzi*, and after that had proved a success, it accepted *The Flying Dutchman*. The latter, however, first performed at the Royal Saxon Court Theatre on January 2, 1843, was not very cordially received. It was evidently too serious for popular favor. It had not "the glittering processions, splendid scenery and grouping, and imposing action," coupled with brilliant music, that characterized *Rienzi*. Dresden did not give it again for twenty years, but meanwhile it was given at Berlin in 1844, and here Wagner received some encouragement. He wrote later: "From Berlin, where I was entirely unknown, I received from two utter strangers who had been attracted towards me by the impression which *The Flying Dutchman* had produced on them, the first complete satisfaction which I have been permitted to enjoy, with the invitation to continue in the particular directions I had marked out. From this moment I lost more and more from sight the variable public. The opinion from a few intelligent men took the place in my mind of the opinion of the masses which can never be wholly apprehended, although it had been the object

of my labor in my first attempts, when my eyes were not yet open to the light." The drama was not given in England until 1870, and even then in an Italian version, *L' Olandese Dannato*.

We see clearly that *The Flying Dutchman* was another distinct step in Wagner's development. Even more than *Rienzi*, it began to assume the form of a music-drama, rather than a mere opera. Wagner wrote of it that here he shook off the last prejudices still clinging to him from the time when he composed merely for musical instruments, and he now attained the definiteness of the drama. Again he asserted: "With *The Flying Dutchman* began my new career as a poet ; I was now no longer a writer of operatic libretti. Henceforward in my dramatic capacity I was in the first place a poet; not until the poem came to be fully worked out, did I again become a musician. But as a poet I fully divined the power which music possessed for enforcing my words." He meant that now at last he had begun to find himself both as musician and poet. *Rienzi* was his first musical work of unique and worthy character, and *The Flying Dutchman* was his first great poetical achievement.

The music of the first act of *The Flying Dutchman* has been called most picturesque and weird. The atmosphere of the North Sea breathes through the whole drama. One can distinctly hear "the shrilling of the north wind, the roaring of the waves, the breaking of cordage, the banging of booms,—an uncanny sound on a dismal night at sea." The Sailors' Chorus is fine, bright, and tuneful. The Spinning Song is a

**Fore-
word** popular melody with a pure lyric grace about it. Two distinct themes are heard in the drama: the theme of eternal unrest, sometimes called the damnation motif of the captain, and the theme of self-sacrifice, which may be called the salvation motif of the bride. These are the germs of what later became Wagner's leit motif system in music. Mr. W. J. Henderson has given a careful characterization thus: "Wagner divined clearly the necessity of subordinating mere pictorial movements to the play of emotion, and it will easily be discerned that the three acts of *The Flying Dutchman* reduced themselves to a few broad emotional episodes. In the first our attention is centred upon the longing of the Dutchman, and in the second upon the love of Senta. In the third we have the inevitable and hopeless struggle of the passion of Erik against Senta's love. All music not designed to embody these broad emotional states is scenic, such as the storm music and choruses of the sailors and the women."

Wagner's conception of the story seems to be, as H. R. Haweis puts it: "Immense unhappiness drawn by magnetic attraction to immense love, tried by heart-rending doubt and uncertainty, and crowned with fidelity and triumphant love, the whole embodied in a clear, simple story, summed up in a few situations of terrible strength and inexorable truth — this is *The Flying Dutchman*." But a still finer summary of the story in fresh and picturesque language is given in Wagner's own comment on the over-

ture, — which is in itself a magic and tempestuous foreword to the drama. Wagner's explanation is as follows, and is a capital example of his vigorous prose style: "Driven along by the fury of the gale, the terrible ship of The Flying Dutchman approaches the shore, and reaches the land, where its captain has been promised he shall one day find salvation and deliverance. We hear the compassionate tones of this saving promise which affects us like prayers and lamentations. Gloomy in appearance and bereft of hope, the doomed man is listening to them also. Weary and longing for death, he paces the strand, while his crew, worn out and tired of life, are silently employed in making all taut on board. How often has he, ill-fated, already gone through the same scene! How often has he steered his ship on ocean's billows to the inhabited shores on which, at each seven years' truce, he has been permitted to land! How many times has he fancied he has reached the limit of his torment, and alas! how repeatedly has he, terribly undeceived, been obliged to betake himself again to his wild wanderings at sea! In order that he may secure release by death he has made common cause in his anguish with the flood and tempests against himself; he has driven his ship into the gaping gulf of the billows, yet the gulf has not swallowed it up; through the surf of the breakers he has steered it upon the rocks, yet the rocks have not broken it in pieces. All the terrible dangers of the sea, at which he once laughed in his wild eagerness for energetic action, now mock at him. They do

**Fore-
word**

him no injury. Under a curse he is doomed to wander o'er ocean's wastes, forever in quest of treasures which fail to reanimate him, and without finding that which alone can redeem him! Swiftly a smart-looking ship sails by him; he hears the jovial familiar song of its crew as returning from a voyage they make jolly on their nearing home. Enraged at their merry humor, he gives chase, and coming up with them in the gale, so scares and terrifies them, that they become mute in their fright and take to flight. From the depth of his terrible misery he shrieks out for redemption; in his horrible banishment from mankind it is a woman alone that can bring him salvation. Where and in what country tarries his deliverer? Where is there a feeling heart to sympathize with his woes? Where is she who will not turn away from him in horror and fright, like those cowardly fellows who in their terror hold up the cross at his approach? A lurid light now breaks through the darkness; like lightning it pierces his tortured soul. It vanishes, and again beams forth. Keeping his eye upon his guiding star, the sailor steers toward it over waves and floods. What is it that so powerfully attracts him, but the gaze of a woman, who, full of sublime sadness and divine sympathy, is drawn towards him! A heart has opened its lowest depths to the awful sorrows of this ill-fated one; it cannot but sacrifice itself for his sake, and breaking in sympathy for him, annihilate itself in his woes. The unhappy one is overwhelmed by this divine appearance; his ship is broken in pieces and swallowed up

in the gulf of the billows; but he, saved and exalted, emerges from the waves, with his victorious deliverer at his side, and ascends to Heaven, led by the rescuing hand of sublimest love."

**Fore-
word**

OLIVER HUCKEL

May, 1914

PART I: THE PHANTOM SHIP

THE PHANTOM SHIP



STEEP and rocky cove on Norway's coast, —

That fairy-haunted land where deep fiords

Pierce to the heart of mountains strong and mighty,

Where curling mists creep round the lofty cliffs

That tower so vast that those who upward gaze

Feel but as atoms in infinity;

Where mountain summits higher rise, and glaciers

That glance and flash in crystal floods of light;

While fairest vales of green in beauty hide

Between the frowning cliffs and lofty mountains;

Where laughing waterfalls and pouring torrents

A thousand feet of misty floods fling down.

To-day the headlands darken with a storm,

The clouds hang full and heavy on the mountains

With lowering tempest. Near the shore a barque,

Norwegian from her build and dim-seen flag,

Has cast her anchor, and the busy sailors

With shouts are furling sails and coiling ropes.

The captain of the ship has gone ashore,

And, standing on a high rock, landward gazed,

To learn perchance what region they have reached.

The sailors sang: "Yeho! yeho! Land ho!"

The captain shouted: "On board there, how goes it?"

The Phantom Ship

The helmsman answered: "Captain, all is well!
And we are on a safe and holding ground."

"Ay," spake the captain, "it is Sandwyk-
Strand.

Full well I know the waters of this bay.
Far off upon that shore I see my home,—
Senta, my child, I fancy in my arms.
She waits and watches for me even now!—
Until this blast from devil's depths blew
forth!—

Who trusts the wind, trusts all the craft of
Hell!

What hope but this,—the tempest will not
last,—

When thus it rages, soon its wrath is spent.
Yeho! my sailor lads! you've braved the storm;
Now, take it easy, for the worst is o'er!
And, gallant helmsman, take the watch for me
While down below I seek an hour of rest.
Danger is fled, yet still keep sharp lookout!"

With cheery voice the helmsman answered
him:

"Rely on me! Rest easy, captain mine."
And as he watched and steered he gaily sang
A happy sailor-song of long ago:

"**T**HROUGH tempest and storm from
far-off seas,
My darling, draw I near!
O'er billows blown by the southern breeze,
My darling, am I here!
My darling, if there were no South wind,
Ne'er could I come to thee;

O dear South wind, to me be kind,
My darling she longs for me!
Yeho! yeho! My lads, yeho!
Yeho! and hallo! Yeho!

**The
Phantom
Ship**

"From the southern shores, from the far-off
lands,
On thee oft have I thought!
Through thunder and waves from the Moor-
ish strands
A gift to thee have I brought.
My darling, praise the sweet South wind,
I bring thee a golden ring, —
O dear South wind, to me be kind,
My darling doth spin and sing.
Yeho! yeho! My lads, yeho!
Yeho! and hallo! Yeho!"

And as he sang, far-off a ship appeared,
A strange and uncouth hull of antique bulk, —
Her sails were blood-red, her tall masts were
black,
And in a deadly silence drew she near,
Piercing the curtained blackness of the night,
Until she hove to by the Norwegian,
Laying alongside almost hull to hull.
What could this queer craft be, —so weirdly
built?
Perchance that ship men called "The Flying
Dutchman,"
Whose legend was in every sailor's heart? —
That reckless mariner, who boldly swore
To reach his port in spite of Heaven or Hell.
Now, for his blasphemy, he sails the seas

**The
Phantom
Ship**

Forevermore, and never reaches port,
And never can attain to welcome death
Until some loving woman gives her life
In willing sacrifice for his redemption.
But as the years go on his heart is bitter,
For none will love him. Oft upon the deck
Headlong he flings himself in black despair.
Now, hark! for there the captain of the craft
Is speaking. There he stands upon his deck!
Forspoth some sorrow of his long-pent heart
Finds words in heavy sadness and despair.
Yea, listen now, for he is moaning forth
His clearly heard soliloquy of gloom:
"The time is up, and once again is ended
Another term of seven dreary years!
The weary sea casts me upon the strand.
Ha, haughty ocean! it will not be long .
Before thy waves shall bear me once again.
Thou changest, but unchanging is my fate.
The saving help which on the land I seek
Will nevermore be found. To thee, O sea,
Flowing the wide world round, shall I be bound,
Until thy last great billow breaks in foam
And the vast flood has vanished evermore.
How often have I longed to find a grave
Engulfed within the ocean's deepest depths, —
But nay! the face of death could not be found!
How often have I rushed my eager ship
Upon the rocks to find the wished-for end, —
But nay! there was no tomb among the rocks.
Full oft I boldly sought the pirate's sword
In wildest conflict, hoping for my death:
'Here!' cried I, 'show thy prowess and thy
might,

The
Phantom
Ship

My ship is freighted with all treasure-store!
But nay! the greedy sea's barbarian son
In horror crossed himself, and took to flight!
For me no grave! For me no hope of death!
Such is the law accurst that holds my doom.
I pray thee, now, O angel bright from Heaven,
Who won for me unlooked-for help and grace,
Was I the unhappy victim of thy sport,
When thou didst show to me the way of
peace?

Ah, fruitless hope! Illusion fond and false!
For faithful love dwells on the earth no more.
Only a single hope is left to me,
Only one wish still flutters in my breast:
It is that this old earth, though still it whirls,
Some day must end its course in utter ruin.
O day of judgment, youngest, latest day,
When wilt thou dawn and quench my endless
night?

When draws it nigh, that final, awful crash
In which the whole vast universe is lost?
When all the dead are raised again to life
Then death, sweet death, shall come to me at
last!

Ye worlds, oh, haste and end your whirling
course
And bring me endless rest in welcome death!"

Now as the captain wailed in piteous tone,—
For dark despair enthralled him utterly,—
The strange crew of his craft reëchoed him:
"And bring us endless rest in welcome death!"
The Norway captain grimly saw and heard;
But all unconscious of the craft and speech

The Phantom Ship

His helmsman grasped the rudder, humming
low.

The captain called: "Yeho, my helmsman, ho!"
And straight he spake: "Ay, ay, sir! all is well!"
And to his song again addressed himself:

"O dear South wind, to me be kind,
My darling—"

Again the captain called: "Dost thou see
naught?"

Zounds! Thou art keeping sharp lookout, my
mate!

There lies a ship! How long hast thou been
sleeping?"

He gazed astonished at the phantom ship.
Whence had it come, and how, without a sound?

He felt uncanny and ripped out an oath:

"By the devil! 't is so! Forgive me, captain
mine!

Ahoy, yon ship! Ahoy, ahoy, I say!"

But they returned no answer and no sign,
And with a laugh the Norway captain said:

"They seem as slow and dead as we are here!"

Again the helmsman called: "Ahoy, I say!

Answer! Whence, whither, tell me what's your
flag?"

But quick his captain held him with the words:

"Forbear! I see the captain on the deck.

Ahoy, good seaman! What's thy ship, and
land?"

And the strange captain answered with a sigh:

"Far have I come! Wouldst thou in this fierce
weather

Drive me from anchorage into the storm?"

He spake: "Nay, God forbid! The mariner

Loves well good fellowship. But what's thy name?"

With curious tone he cried: "I am a Dutchman."

But as he spoke, he seemed to stand aloft
In greater form and nobleness withal.

Tall, dark, and dignified, — a handsome man, —
Full bearded, and with black and piercing eyes.

A dark hat with a broad and flowing brim,

A Spanish mantle trailing from his shoulders, —

A gentleman, a scholar, and a captain,

And round him shone the silver of the moon-
light.

The Norway captain spake: "Be welcome, then!

The fierce storm drove thee to this rock-bound
coast.

I fared no better, though a few leagues hence

My home awaits me, and my one fair daughter,

Pride of my heart and light of my dear home.

O adverse winds! Now must I once again

Set forth to reach my hearth. But tell me,

pray,

Whence comest thou? What damage hast
thou met?"

And the weird Dutchman answered with a
laugh:

"My ship is sound, — no damage can it suffer.

Though storms may rage and wildest winds
may blow,

I wander scathless o'er the watery wastes.

How long? That can I scarce relate to thee,

Since I no longer count the passing years.

Nor could I name for thee, if thou shouldst
ask it,

The Phantom Ship

The list of lands where I have been in port.
That land alone for which I dearly long,
I cannot find,—my own dear native shore.
Oh, grant to me a little while thy home,
And of thy friendship thou shalt not repent.
With treasures brought from every clime and
zone

My ship is richly laden. Wilt thou share
Thy humble roof with me, and give me rest,
Just one sweet taste of home and sheltered
peace,
I'll make thee sharer of my treasure-store."
Quick spake the Norway captain: "Strange it
sounds!

How can I well believe thy wondrous words?
A baleful star has followed thy sad life;
Would I might serve thee, bless thee, if I can.
Yet,—dare I ask,—what treasures brings thy
ship?"

Smiled gently the Dutch captain as he said:
"The rarest treasures I shall show to thee,
Most precious pearls, and stones of royal cost.
Behold them, and know well their priceless
worth,—

All these I offer for thy friendly roof."

And at a sign his men brought forth a chest
Full of fair silks and satins, rubies, pearls,
And emeralds, and gold in rings and bracelets.
With blank amaze the Norway captain cried:
"What! Is it possible? Such costly treasures!
Who has the price to purchase such rare
gems?"

But eagerly the Dutchman answered him:

"The price? The price already have I named, —
All these for shelter for a single night!
Nay, what thou seest only is small part
Of all the treasure in my vessel's hold.
What use my treasures to me? For no wife,
Nor child, nor home, nor native land is mine.
So all my riches will I share with thee,
If thou wilt share with me thy humble home."
The Norway captain mused: "Can it be true?"
Again the Dutchman asked: "Hast thou a
daughter?
I think I heard thee mention thy fair daughter."
He made reply: "I have, —and dear to me."
Then cried the Dutchman, for a secret hope
Had risen in his heart that here, at last,
Might be the destined fair deliverer:
"A wife I long for. Let her be my bride."

The Norway captain mused in joyous thought:
"How! Heard I right? My daughter for his
bride!
'T is from deep gratitude his offer comes.
Much do I fear, unless I close with him,
That he as suddenly may change his mind.
Scarce know I whether I'm awake or dream, —
Most welcome such a splendid son-in-law!
Mad would I be such fortune to refuse,
Full charmed will I accept his happy terms."
Most wistfully the Dutchman spake to him,
Flaunting again the treasures of his coffers:
"Alas, I have no wife, nor child, nor hearth,
Nothing to bind me to this weary world.
Relentless fate pursues my bitter life.
The curse, the curse, is ever at my heels.

**The
Phantom
Ship**

Never shall I reach home or native land.
What good to me my jewels and my gold!
Come, give thy daughter to me as a bride,
And all my untold wealth shall be thine own."
But still in doubt the Norwegian held off,
And spake aloud the hesitating words:
"Yea, stranger, fair and lovely is my daughter
And gives her father all a true child's love;
She is my pride, the best of my possessions,
In grief my comfort, and in mirth my joy."
More eagerly the smiling Dutchman spake:
"Always her father shall receive her love, —
If true to him, true to the man she weds."
The Norway captain shook his head and said:
"Thou givest jewels and most precious pearls.
The rarest treasure is a faithful wife —"
"Thou givest me?" he asked most tenderly.
"Yea," said the other; "here I pledge my word.
I mourn thy fate. So generous thou art.
I have discerned thy noble heart and soul.
I want thee for my son. And were thy wealth
Not half so great, no other would I choose!"
"I thank thee," cried the Dutchman, "from my
heart.
And shall I my fair bride behold to-day?"
"The next good wind," he said, "shall bear us
home,
Then thou shalt see her. If she pleases thee —"
"She shall be mine!" he cried with eagerness.
"The angel to absolve me from my fate!
When out of torment's hard unceasing toil
My heart has longed for saving peace and rest,
To me 't was given to cling with desperate
courage

The
Phantom
Ship

To one faint hope that ever with me dwelt.
Dare I in this fair fancy now to revel,
That such sweet angel shall release me soon?
And after this tormenting ceaseless anguish
I shall attain at last to peace and rest?
Ah! all but hopeless though I seem to be,
Yet does my heart still cling to this one hope!"
Most cordially the Norway captain spake:
"Praised be the storm that drove me on this
strand!

Forsooth, at first I did my fate bewail,
But now I thank the tempest and the waves
That brought us here together to this coast.
Yea, any father might in truth rejoice
In such a son-in-law, such lucky fate.
With this dear son of wealth and noble heart
I gladly share my daughter and my home!"

And now the storm has ceased and winds are
fair.

The helmsman's voice is singing the old song:

"O dear South wind, to me be kind!"

While all the sailors shout: "Yeho! yeho!"

Spake the Norwegian: "See, thy luck has
turned!

The wind is fair, the sea is calm and bright.

We'll hoist the anchor, set the billowing sails,

And reach my happy home this very day!"

Again the sailors' chantry sounded out:

"Yeho! yeho! My lads, yeho!

Yeho! and hallo! Yeho!"

The Dutchmanspake: "If I might but suggest,
Lead thou the course. The wind is fresh and fair.

The Phantom Ship

My crew are weary ; I will let them rest ;
Then in a little while, I'll follow on."
The other asked: "But if the wind should
change?"

He answered: "Nay, this wind will steady blow.
'T is from the faithful South, both fair and
strong.

My ship is swift. 'T will overtake thee soon."
Quoth he: "Forsooth, thy ship must make
good speed.

Farewell! To-day thou may'st my daughter
see!"

And with a joyous cry, he spake: "God grant!"

So the fair Norway craft put out to sea,
While her proud captain scanned his ship and
cried:

"Yeho! how quick the winds have filled the
sails!

Yeho! my sailor lads, come, work away!"
And as they worked their hearty voices sang:

"**T**HROUGH tempest and storm from
far-off seas,
My darling, draw I near!
O'er billows blown by the southern breeze,
My darling, am I here!
My darling, if there were no South wind,
Ne'er could I come to thee;
O dear South wind, to me be kind,
My darling she longs for me!
Yeho! yeho! My lads, yeho!
Yeho! and hallo! Yeho!"

PART II: A WOMAN'S LOVE



A WOMAN'S LOVE



GREAT room in the Norway captain's home,—

Captain Daland his name,—an honored name

Through all the coast of Norway and afar.
For many years has he the deep sea followed,
Knows well the perils of the Northern main,
The howling storms and all their fierce sea-children,

The black sea-gulls that beat the hurtling winds.

He knows the drifting perils of the icebergs,
And all the anger of the hidden reefs.

His good ship oft has fought the desperate gale,

And oft escaped the lure of storm-tossed headlands

And singing surges beating on the cliffs.

High o'er the sounding sea his craft has sped
Full many a league, fierce driven by the fiends
Of awful whirlwinds near the dreaded maelstrom,—

"O Christ! he cried, "be near and steer me straight!"—

But ever after all the storms of life

Here in this home has he found peace and rest,
Among his books and friends, by his own fire-side.

Maps, charts, and sea-views line the captain's walls,

And in the midst a portrait strange and weird,
Painted long years ago, and bought by him
On one of his far voyages to Holland.

A Wo- The visage of a man with handsome face,
man's But pale and sad, as if enthralled of fate;
Love His beard is black, his cloak of Spanish cut.

Fair Senta sat and gazed long at the portrait
As if a secret spell was on her soul,
While all the maidens spinning at their wheels,
Her gay companions for the afternoon,—
Fair maidens, rosy cheeked, with golden hair
In circling braids, like crowns around their
heads,
And bright blue eyes, sparkling with innocence,
Their dainty garments, simple, pure, and sweet,
Their bodices and slippers quaint and neat,
The pride and gladness of Old Norway's
strand,—
Sang merrily this cheery spinning song:

“**H**UM and buzz, good wheel awhirl-
ing,
Lively, lovely dance around!
Spin, a thousand threads a-twirling,
Let the pleasant music sound!
My sweetheart sails the ocean o'er,
For home he sighs
And dear one's eyes.
My faithful wheel, oh, rush and roar!
Ah, if thy breeze
But ruled the seas,
'T would soon my love to me restore!
Maidens spinning,
Din, din, din!
Sweethearts winning,
Spin, spin, spin!”



SENTA AT THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

Then up spake good dame Mary, her old nurse,
Mistress of all the sisters of the distaff:

"Just see! how busy every wheel is flying!
Such industry must surely win us sweethearts!"

But quick they cried together in reproof:

"Dame Mary, pray be still! for well you know
Our spinning song is not yet at an end!"

She laughed, and answered them with spark-
ling eyes:

"Sing on! stop not your wheels for all the
world!

But, Senta, dear, why dost thou silent sit
While all the rest are singing at their wheels?"
And once again their voices sweetly sang:

"**H**UM and buzz, good wheel awhirl-
ing,

Canter, gallop, dance around!

Spin, a thousand threads a-twirling,

Turn, good wheel, with humming sound!

On distant seas my love doth sail.

In southern lines

Much gold he mines.

Turn, turn, my wheel, nor tire nor fail!

The gold he wins

For her who spins!

Her ears shall hear his loving tale!

Spin, spin!

Busy maiden!

Hum, wheel,

Music-laden!"

Still watching the fair Senta, as she gazed
Upon the painting, Mary smiling spake:

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

"Thou naughty child, if thou dost do no spinning,
Thy lover will not give thee any gift!"

But all the maidens laughed and gaily spake:
"There is no need for her to toil and spin,
Her lover does not sail the stormy main,
'T is luscious game, instead of gold, he brings.
One quickly learns a happy huntsman's
worth!"

And the arch Mary added: "Look at her!
Always before that painting! Senta, child,
Art thou to dream away thy girlhood's life
Just gazing at that visage of a man?"
But Senta answered her in quiet mood:
"Why hast thou told me of his many sorrows?
I learned from thee his hapless fate, poor
soul!"

Quoth Mary softly: "God be with thee, girl!"
And others cried: "Alas! what do we hear?
Her sighs are for this pale and phantom man!"
Moaned Mary: "Her poor head is sore dis-
traught!"

Another spake: "What power a picture has!"
And Mary added in a lower tone:
"Useless it seems, though I should chide each
day.

Come, Senta, turn thy pretty eyes toward us."

But Senta moved not, and they whispered fast:
"She does not hear or mind thee, — she's en-
thralled!

Alack! This may turn out a sad affair!
You know how hot and jealous Erik is, —

He scarce can bear an insult or a slight.
Say naught, lest blinded by a jealous rage,
He shoot this hated rival on the wall."

Stirred to the quick, poor Senta fiercely cried:

"Now cease your foolish jesting, empty heads,
My temper is fast reaching breaking point."

So they desisted and once more they sang:

"Hum and buzz, good wheel awirling,
Canter, gallop, dance around!

Spin, a thousand threads a-twirling,

Turn, good wheel, with humming sound!"

Spake Senta with a weird look in her eyes:

"Enough now of this endless spinning song.

Its hum and buzz weary these ears of mine.

If you would bring me to your way of thought,

You must seek out a better song than that!"

They cried: "Good, sing a better song thyself!"

She answered: "Nay, much rather would I
hear

Dame Mary sing that ballad that I love."

Quoth Mary: "God forbid! no ballad for me!

'T is time to let 'The Flying Dutchman' rest."

But Senta would not be rebuffed, and spake:

"How oft I've heard you sing it! Why not
now?

Then I will sing it. Harken, girls, to me.

The tale of sorrow and relentless fate

For one poor man. 'T will surely touch your
hearts."

They cried: "Well, let us have the song!"

While she insisted: "Mark my every word!"

"Yea, every spinning-wheel shall rest!" they
cried.

"Except mine," muttered Mary, "it shall spin!"

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

Then Senta, seated in an old armchair,
Senta, the fairest maiden of them all,
Senta, the golden haired, the rosy cheeked,
Senta, the blue-eyed and the loving hearted,
Senta of merry laugh and jolly jest,
Now, with a solemn spell upon her face
And with a mystic light within her eyes,
Sang this weird ballad of "The Flying Dutch-
man:"

"**A** HOY! yeho! yeho! hallo!
Saw ye the ship on the stormy deep,
Night-black the mast, blood-red the sail!
On deck unceasing watch doth keep
The strange ship's captain, sad and pale.
Hurrah! How roars the wind. Yeho! yeho!
Hurrah! How bends the mast. Yeho! yeho!
Hurrah! Like an arrow she flies, without aim,
Without goal, without rest, forevermore.

"Yet can this sad-faced seaman
Be freed from the curse infernal,
If on land he can find a woman
To pledge him her love eternal.
Ah, that redemption may come to his life,
Grant him, O Heaven, the gift of a wife.

"Once, when the winds and seas were wroth,
He sought round a certain cape to sail.
He cursed and swore a mighty oath:
'I'll do it spite of Heaven and Hell.'
Alack! This oath old Satan heard!
Alack! He marked it every word!
Alack! He condemned him to sail the sea
Without haste, without rest, forevermore.

"Yet, that the wretched man might find
A full redemption here on earth,
Some woman must have an angel mind
And show to him her loving worth.
Ah, may'st thou, spectral seaman, soon
Receive from Heaven this blessed boon.

"Every seven years he seeks a port,
To find a bride he wanders round.
Every seven years he is fate's disport,
For never a faithful wife is found.
Yeho! unfurl the sails! yeho!
Yeho! weigh anchor now! yeho!
Yeho! false love, false faith,—to the sea
Without haste, without rest, forevermore!"

And as she ended, cried the maidens all:
"Ah, where is she to whose deep loving heart
God's angel may direct thee for redemption?
Where lingers she, thy very own till death,
O spectral captain, whatsoe'er betide thee?"
With sudden ecstasy, fair Senta cried:
"Would I were she! Would that my love
might save thee!
Would that God's angel might direct thee
hither,
Through me to bring redemption to thy life!"
And Mary and the maidens cried, amazed:
"Heaven help! Why, Senta! Thou'rt beside
thyself!"

Sudden her lover Erik in the doorway,—
A stalwart youth, with face of ruddy glow,
And fair blue eyes,—a lad like a young viking,

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

Clad in the mountain hunter's brave array;
And as he came he heard her fervent words,
And stunned and hurt he cried in grim de-
spair:

"Senta, my Senta! wouldst thou give me up!"
And all the maidens crowding round him cried:
"Good Erik, help us! She has clean gone mad!"
And Mary said: "This outburst breaks my
heart!

Accursèd painting, out thou goest from here
As soon as her dear father comes again."

Spake Erik: "He is now upon the way!"

Cried Senta: "What, my father coming now!"

He spake: "From yonder cliff I saw his sail."

And all the maidens cried with joyous hearts:

"Our sailor lads are coming! Come, let's go!"

But prudent Mary spake with knowing look:

"Hold, eager hearts! Let us snug up the house!

Our sailor lads have healthy appetites,—

They will be asking for the cake and wine.

Keep back your anxious souls a little longer,

Nor leave undone a single needful task."

Gaily they answered: "Much have we to ask
them,

We cannot long hold back our eager hearts.

Quick, make all right,—the house, and cake,
and wine,—

Then not a single duty holds us longer."

Sudden the voice of Erik eager called:

"Stay, Senta! Just a single moment, stay,

And from this desperate torture set me free.

Thou wilt not thus forsake and cast me off!"

But Senta asked: "And shall this surely come?"

Impetuous he spake with trembling fears:
"O Senta, speak! What will become of me?
Thy father nears. Ere he again sets sail
He will fulfil what often he has planned."
And as she asked: "Erik, what dost thou
mean?"

He answered quick: "To choose a husband for
thee!

O Senta, listen as I speak this word:
My heart is faithful to thee until death,
My frugal cot, my huntsman's happy skill,—
Dare I present them humbly to thy hand?
Would my proud offering be quickly spurned?
If my fond heart in bitter sorrow broke,
Say, Senta, who would plead my cause for me?"
She spake: "Let these things rest. Let me be
gone.

I haste to greet my father as he comes,
For if this once his daughter fails to meet him
Upon the ship's deck, hurt his heart will be."
Cried Erik: "So, wilt thou escape from me?"
She answered: "I must hasten to the port."
Persisted he: "My presence dost thou shun?"
But firmly she exclaimed: "Nay, I must go!"

Then in a deep despair, he fondly pleaded:
"Wilt thou go forth and leave the wound still
bleeding

Which thou hast made in this most loving
heart?

Oh, listen to me in this parting hour!
Hear what I ask, my final fondest hope,
Say, when this heart with woe is sorely break-
ing,

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

Will it be Senta who shall plead for me?"

She answered: "What! Thou doubtest my true heart?"

Thou questionest if I am kind to thee?

Now, tell me, what has stirred up this new passion?

What is it fills thy soul with dark dismay?"

He cried: "Thou knowest,—wealth thy father seeketh,

And, Senta, thou,—how dare I count on thee?

I pray thee only grant this one petition,

Grieve not my heart so deeply every day."

Quoth she: "Thy heart? What have I done to it?"

He spake: "What must I think? That picture there!"

She smiled and said: "What ails that picture there?"

Replied he: "Nay, but thy infatuation—"

Asked she: "And can I show no sympathy?"

He added: "And that ballad that thou lovest, The strange weird ballad that thou sang'st to-day."

She said: "I'm like a child, and scarce I know What songs I sing. But tell me, Erik, now, And dost thou fear a ballad and a painting?"

He spake: "Thou art so pale. This is my fear."

She asked: "Should I not grieve for his sad fate?"

But Erik looked at her and fondly cried:

"Senta, doth not my sorrow grieve thee more?"

Softly she answered: "Thou hast said enough.

Hast thou a sorrow like the woe he bears?

A Wo-
man's
Love

Dost thou not know this sad one's awful doom?
Look, with what anguish, what deep, dark
despair,
His piteous eyes are looking now on me!
Ah! what a bitter and relentless fate!
How deep the sympathy that wrings my
heart!"

Moaned Erik: "Woe is me! My sad dream's
true!

May God protect thee! Satan snares thee
now!"

And as he muttered prayer, fair Senta cried: -
"What doth affright thee that thou turnest
pale?"

Spake he, with solemn voice: "Now, Senta,
list!

A dream it was, — heed thou its warning voice!
I lay upon a lofty cliff a-dreaming
And gazed across the silver shimmering sea.
I heard the billows ever ceaseless roar
As on the beach they wildly leaped and broke.
A foreign ship lay nearby in the offing.
I marked her, weird and wonderful to see, —
Two men drew near upon the landing-place,
And one I clearly saw, — thy father dear —"
And eagerly she asked: "Who was the other?"
Slowly he spake: "Him also well I knew,
With Spanish mantle, black and ghostly
mien —"

"And sad appealing eyes," she added quickly.
"That mariner in yonder frame," he said.
Then Senta asked: "And was I in the dream?"
"Yea," answered Erik, "from this house thou
camest,

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

And hastened to give greeting to thy father.
Yet scarcely hadst thou reached thy father's
side

Ere thou wert kneeling at the stranger's feet
Clasping his knees in tenderest entreaty."

Asked Senta: "What did he? He raised me
up?"

Spake Erik: "Yea, he raised thee to his breast,
And thou didst cling to him with fervor wild
Giving him kiss for kiss impassionate."

Eager she asked: "And then — what happened
then?"

A moment Erik paused in gloomy wrath:

"I saw him take thee on his shadowy ship
And carry thee away to unknown seas."

And Senta, thrall'd by pity, slowly mused:
"He seeks for me! Surely I must behold him!
And with him I must fathom all the depths."
Cried Erik: "Frightful end! Ha, it is clear
She is foredoomed! My darkest dream was
true!"

But Senta, yet spellbound, mused on and
spake:

"Ah, spectral seaman, that thou soon mightest
find her!

May Heaven grant him this true, faithful
bride!"

Scarce had her words gone forth, when lo, a
sound

Of opening doors, and on the threshold stood
Her father, and a stranger by his side,—

A stranger, tall and handsome, sad of face,

A Spanish mantle round his shoulders thrown.
In truth a living semblance to the sailor
Whose portrait hung there yonder on the wall.
And Senta with amazement was o'erwhelmed
And stood in silence, as her father cried:
"My child, thou seest me here upon the thresh-
old, —

Yet no caress, and not one loving kiss?
Thou standest there as if transfixed and dumb!
Do I deserve, my Senta, such a greeting?"
She gasped: "God guard thee well, O father
mine!

Who is this stranger coming here with thee?"
And looking at him proudly, with a smile
Of happy triumph, quickly spake her father:
"Wouldst know this stranger who is now my
friend?

Wilt thou, my child, give him a friendly greet-
ing,
True mariner, like me, yet now our guest?
Long without home he wandered far and wide;
Vast wealth from distant lands he has
amassed,

And since from his own land he is an exile,
He offers all if he can share our home.
What sayest thou, Senta, if this noble stranger
Should here abide beneath our humble roof?"

Then, bowing to his guest, he spake again
In joyous tone and with unfeigned delight:
"Pray, tell me, have I spoken overpraise?
Look for thyself! Is not my daughter fair?
May not my heart o'erflow with fervent praise?
Confess how full she is of charm and grace.

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

Wilt thou, my child, give welcome to our guest
And also welcome give him to thy heart?
Give him thy hand, for bridegroom shalt thou
call him.

Do as thy father fondly doth desire,
And thou to-morrow morn shalt wedded be.
Look on these bracelets and behold these gems,
And these are trifles from his wondrous wealth.
Dost thou not long to have them, dearest child?
And all shall be thine own the very hour
The wedding-ring is slipped upon thy finger.
What! Neither speaks! Why should I linger
here?

I see! 'T were best that they be left alone. —
My daughter, may'st thou win this noble man!
Believe me, such good fortune ne'er comes
twice.

Stay here together; I will leave you now.
Farewell, dear sir, my daughter will be gra-
cious;
She is as true as she is beautiful."

He hurried off, and they were left alone.
Ah, do they start! A secret tremor stirs them;
A mystic something binds their secret souls.
A moment gazed the stranger at her face,
Then slowly to himself his thought spake forth:
"Out of the days of the dim distant past
This maiden's face and form appear to me.
What I have dreamed through countless years
of sorrow

Before my eyes at last do I behold!
Oft has the longing for a noble woman
Burned in my heart during my darkest moods.

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

But it was Satan and his evil passion
Leading me on to anguish and despair.
Now this new glow that flames within my
heart —

Dare I, accurst, proclaim it love's devotion?
Ah, no! this longing for repose and peace,
Would it through such an angel come to me!"
As if enthralled, fair Senta slowly spake:
"O'erwhelmed I seem in dreams most wonder-
ful!

Is it a vision that mine eyes behold,
Or am I now set free from long delusion,
And day at last has truly dawned for me?
See, there he stands, his face with sorrow
laden, —

He speaks to me his mingled hope and fear;
Is it the voice of sympathy deceives me?
No, as in dreams I saw him, stands he there!
The sorrow that within my bosom burns,
Ah! this compassion — shall I call it so? —
Mingles with thy deep longing for redemption.
Through me, sad soul, pray God to send re-
lease."

Their cheeks are flame. A sudden love they
feel.

Her father's sordid greed is all forgot,
'T is love and pity only that speak forth —
The dream of yesterday, the dream of love,
That floats o'er time for all eternity.
Eager he asked, hope rising in his heart:
"Wilt thou thy father's wish and will fulfil?
What he has promised, darest thou confirm?
Wilt thou forever give thyself to me
And reach thy loving hand to save a stranger?"

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

And shall I find at last the end of trouble,
In thy true love the long-sought peace and
rest?"

Most earnestly she spake and gave him
answer:

"Whoe'er thou art and whatsoe'er the curse
That with relentless woe has driven thee;
Whate'er the doom that I shall share with
thee,

My father's will by me shall be obeyed."

Again he spake with wonder in his words:

"So innocent and full of childlike trust,
How canst thou feel compassion for my woes?"
She made reply: "Oh, wondrous woes and
griefs!

Would I might bring some comfort and some
peace!"

And at these tender words he cried with joy:

"Thy voice is music in my night of woe!

Thou art an angel, and an angel's love

Can peace and comfort bring to my sad heart!

Ah, if redemption still be mine to hope,

Heaven grant that it may come to me through
thee!"

And Senta deeply echoed his heart's prayer:

"Ah, if redemption still be his to hope,

Heaven grant that it may come to him through
me."

Half doubting still the miracle of grace

That seemed so near, he spake the trembling
words:

"Oh, if thou knewest fully the dire fate

Which must be fully borne by thee with me,

Wouldst thou have given me thy solemn
promise,
Wouldst thou have sworn to be my own true
bride?

A Wo-
man's
Love

Thy heart had shuddered at the awful doom
That gave to me thy glorious golden youth
Before thou thus surrendered all to-me,
Thine innocence, thine honor, and thy trust!"

But with a childlike face of earnestness
She answered him, in happy truthful words:

"Well do I know a woman's holy duties,—
O sad, unhappy man, me canst thou trust!
Leave me to do the right whate'er the fate,
For all its dread decrees do I defy!

Within the secret realm of sacred conscience
I know the high demands of faith and love.

Him whom I choose, I choose forevermore,
And loving him, I love him e'en till death!"

Exultantly he cried at this new vow:

"A heavenly balm for all my wounds and woes
Flows from her oath and holy plighted word!"

While Senta in a happy thralldom spake:

"'T was surely some mysterious magic power
That made me thus his glad deliverer."

With constant and increasing joy he cried:

"Hark ye! redemption have I found at last!

Ye mighty powers who erstwhile laid me low!

Star of misfortune, thou art growing pale!

Light of my hope, thou shinest radiant!

Ye angels, who once utterly forsook me,

Strengthen my heart again, and keep it true!"

And looking on him with her loving eyes

Bright with faith's light and tender with love's
tears,

**A Wo-
man's
Love**

Dear Senta spake to him in kindest way:
"Here shalt thou find at last a peaceful home,
Here shall thy ship reach port and be at rest.
What power is it that lives and moves in me?
What impulse stirs my heart to do this deed?
Almighty God, who givest me the courage,
Grant me the strength to be forever true!"

E'en as she spake, her father came again
And looked at them with eager questioning
gaze

And careful words of fair apology:
"Pardon, if I break in upon you now,
But these good folk and neighbors will not
wait.

After each voyage, you know, there comes the
feast.

I would enhance it, so I come to ask
If your espousals are agreed upon.
Methinks you have been talking heart to
heart.

Senta, my child, say, dost thou give consent?"
And dutiful and happy she replied:

"Here is my hand! Freely I give my troth,
And promise to be faithful unto death."

While with a shout of gladness, and his face
Beaming with hope, the Holland captain cried:
"She gives her hand to me! She gives her
troth!

Now are ye conquered, all ye evil powers!"
The father smiled,—his hopes, his dreams
come true,

Senta his daughter soon to be a bride,
The Holland captain soon to be his son,

The wedding dowry of the untold wealth.
He kissed his faithful daughter joyously
And in exultancy proclaimed his heart:
"Ne'er shall ye rue this happy wedding-troth!
Come to the feast! To-day let all rejoice!"

A Wo-
man's
Love

PART III: THE TROTH OF DEATH

THE TROTH OF DEATH



TILL are we in the glorious land of
Norway, —

The land of simple hearts and simple
faith,

The land of noble mountains, stormy seas,
And beautiful great bays, and waterfalls.
Here is a deep fiord, quiet but grand,
With rocky cliff and happy green-clad hills.
Upon this slope the Norway captain's home, —
A charming home in sweet simplicity
Among its pine trees and its fertile fields.
And yonder, on the waters of the fiord,
Lay side by side the vessels anchored still, —
The one the Norway craft by build and sail,
The other one the foreign Holland ship
Of blood-red sails and masts of ebon hue.
The night is clear; the heavens full of stars.
The Norway ship is gaily lighted up,
The sailors making merry on the decks,
But on the Holland ship a darkness broods,
And silence, as of death, reigns over it.
Full lustily the Norway sailors sang:

“HELMSMAN, leave the watch! All dan-
ger's past!

Helmsman, ho! yeho! We're home! we're
home!

See, the sails are furled, the anchor fast!

Helmsman, leave the watch and with us
come!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, our helmsman! here at last we're
home!

**The
Troth of
Death**

"No more we fear the gale or rocky strand,
But all the day right merry shall we be;
Each sailor has a sweetheart on the land,
With her, — and pipes and wine, — good-by
the sea.
Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!
Heigho, our helmsman! here at last we're
home!"

Now nearby on the strand in best array,
Bearing their dainty baskets heaped with cakes
And carrying jugs of fragrant native wine,
Came down to greet them all the village
maidens,
With merry laughter and with laughing eyes.
And loud they cried with jolly raillery:
"No, do our eyes deceive us? They are dancing!
They look so merry and self-satisfied,
Of course they need no maidens for their frolic!"
But catching sight of them the sailors cried:
"Ho, maidens, halt! Where are you going so
fast?"
They answered, laughing: "Ah, you scent the
goodies.
Your neighbors yonder must not starve to
death!
Others need food and drink as well as you!"
The helmsman spake: "Too true! Those
wretched fellows
Seem wilted down for just the lack of drink."
One sailor said: "How deathly still they are!"
The helmsman added: "Yea, how strange the
deck!
No sign of light, no trace of any seamen!"

**The
Troth of
Death**

Then called the maidens to the Holland ship:
"Ho, sailors, ho! We bring a torch with us!
Where have they gone? We can see no one
here."

The Norway sailors cried: "Don't wake them
up!

They're all asleep, and let them slumber on!"

Again the maidens called: "Ho, sailors, an-
swer!"

Laughed the Norwegians: "Ha, ha! They are
dead!

They have no further need for cakes and wine!"

Still cried the maidens: "Ho! sailors, sound
asleep!

Wake up, and keep the feast with us to-day."

The Norway sailors mocked: "They're all
below,

Like dragons watching o'er their hidden gold."

The maidens called: "Ho, here is golden wine!

Surely your thirsty hearts must heed that call!"

But still the Holland craft no answer gave;

Darkness and silence brooded on its deck;

And, quite content, the Norway sailors cried:

"They do not drink, they will not sing,

And not a light is glimmering on their ship.

Leave them alone, they have no need of you!"

But still the maidens gave them one chance
more

And loudly called: "Have you no sweethearts
here?

Will you not come and dance with us, your
friends?"

Then laughed the Norway sailors in great
glee:

**The
Troth of
Death**

"Nay, they are old, their hair is thin and gray,
And all their sweethearts dead these many
years."

The kindly maidens gave a parting call:

"Ahoy there, sailors! Waken up, we say!

We bring you dainty cakes and a cheering cup!

No sound! no answer! Surely they are dead!

No further need have they for food or drink!"

Then spake the Norway helmsman: "True,
most true!

No further need have they for food or drink.

Surely you've heard of the weird Flying Dutch-
man, —

This is his 'ship as truly as I live!"

Then cried the maidens: "Pray don't wake the
crew!

They must be ghosts, — yea, we are sure they
are!"

Again he spake: "How many hundred years
Upon the sea, more feared than rock or storm!"

The maidens cried: "They do not drink, nor
sing,

And not a light is burning on their deck."

The sailors mocked: "Have you no word or
letter

For us to carry to some great-grandfather?"

Echoed the maidens: "All are old and gray,

And all their sweethearts dead these many
years."

Again the Norway sailors called and mocked:

"Ho, phantom sailors, spread your canvas out,

And let The Flying Dutchman show his speed."

The maidens sighed: "They hear not! We're
afraid!

**The
Troth of
Death**

They want us not. Why should we longer
stay?"

And all the Norway sailors cried with joy :
"Ye maidens, give the dead to peace and
rest !

Let us, the living, taste the cake and wine!"

So to the Norway ship the maidens came
With all their wine and dainties, and the
words :

"Well, since your quiet neighbors have re-
fused them,

Take ye the goodies, and be gay of heart!"
But nothing satisfied, the sailors called:

"How? Only cakes and wine, and not your-
selves?

Will you not come and dance with us awhile?"
They laughed and gaily answered: "No, not
now!

'T is ours to see that all have cake and wine.
This is a special feast-day for us all.

After a while we 'll come. Now, drink away,
And, if you will, on with the merry dance.

Only don't wake your weary neighbors up!"

"Hurrah!" the sailors cried, "we have a feast!
Here are most luscious cakes and golden
wine!

All thanks to thee, our neighbor, Flying Dutch-
man."

The Norway helmsman cried: "Yea, let each
man

Fill up a bumper and with thousand thanks
Toast our dear neighbor here, The Flying
Dutchman."

**The
Troth of
Death**

They cried: "Hurrah! yeho! yeho! heigho!
Good neighbors, if ye have a voice and speech,
Wake up at last and join our merriment.
Wake up and sing this jolly song with us!"
And so they sang with lusty voices all:

"**H**ELMSMAN, leave the watch! All dan-
ger's past!

Helmsman, ho, yeho! We 're home, we 're
home!

See, the sails are furled, the anchor fast!

Helmsman, leave the watch and with us
come!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, our helmsman! here at last we 're
home!

"Full many a night we watched in storm and
stress!

Oft have we drunk the salt and briny wave.

Sweethearts, we watch to-day in dainty dress,

And golden wines our thirsty throats do lave!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, bold helmsman! we 're at home, at
home!"

At last the songs and shoutings seemed to
wake

The sleeping sailors of The Flying Dutchman.

They crawled up from below decks and ap-
peared

Like phantoms in the moonlight, and they
gathered

Close to the helm, and sang an answering song

With muffled voices and deep hollow tones,
Like eerie ghosts, with long white hair and
beards,
All hollow-eyed and withered wrinkled faces.
And as their voices fell upon the wind,
The waves began to stir around their ship,—
All else was calm and silent as the grave,—
The billows squirmed in melancholy ire,
The shrill winds shrieked through all the
trembling rigging,
And a weird flame, a dim and ghostly watch-
fire,
Flared out upon the deck, a pale blue light.
And thus their ghostly voices dreary sang:

The
Troth of
Death

“**D**EHO! Ahoy!
Land is here and storm is past!
Hurrah!
Sails are furled! The anchor fast!
Hurrah!
Safe within the bay at last,
Hurrah!

“Sad-faced captain, go on land,
Now that seven years have flown;
Seek a faithful maiden's hand,
Faithful maiden, be his own.

“Bridegroom, let thy hopes be strong!
Hurrah!
Storm-winds be thy wedding song,
Hurrah!
Billows with thee dance along,
Hurrah!

**The
Troth of
Death**

"Captain, captain, hast returned?
Hark, his piping,—'Off to sea!'
Him the hoped-for bride has spurned,
Captain, no good luck for thee!

"Blow, ye storm-winds, howl and blow!
Hurrah!
What care we how fast we go!
Hurrah!
Satan fills our sails! Yeho!
Hurrah!"

So dismal and so gruesome was the song,
While all around was calm and awful silence.
The ship tossed up and down, the winds were
sobbing,
And the sad song from ghostly throats out-
poured
Ended with curses, shrieks, and muttered
laughter.
Then all was deathlike stillness, and the light,
The pale blue of the ghostly watch-fire, sank,
And the Norwegians crossed themselves in
terror.
They felt the blood creep in their veins and
spake
Below their breath: "By Heaven, what a
song!
They look and sing like ghosts. God save our
souls!
Come, let them hear a song from living men.
Up, every man, and sing his best and loud-
est!"
Then with a shout the Norway sailors sang:

“**H**ELMSMAN, leave the watch! All danger's past!

Helmsman, ho, yeho! We're home! we're home!

See, the sails are furled, the anchor fast!

Helmsman, leave the watch and with us come!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, our helmsman! here at last we're home!

“No more we fear the gale or rocky strand,

But all the day right merry shall we be;

Each sailor has a sweetheart on the land,

With her,—and pipes and wine,—good-by the sea!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, our helmsman! here at last we're home!

“Full many a night we watched in storm and stress!

Oft have we drunk the salt and briny wave.

Sweethearts we watch to-day in dainty dress,

And golden wines our thirsty throats do lave!

Hurrah, heigho! let storms and tempests come!

Heigho, bold helmsman! we're at home, at home!”

Sudden came Senta hurrying from the house,

Her lover Erik following at her heels,

In wild dismay, and uttering wrathful words:

“Have I my senses? God! what do I see!—

A vision, or the truth? Oh, tell me quick!”

The
Truth of
Death

**The
Troth of
Death**

But Senta put him off: "Oh, ask me not.
Erik, I cannot, dare not answer thee."
And in a grim despair his heart cried out :
"Just God ! There is no doubt ! I know 't is
true !

What dark, unholy power has snared thy soul ?
What evil spell has cruelly led thee on
To rend in twain my loving, faithful heart ?
Thy father 't was, alas, who brought him here,
That cursèd bridegroom whom I knew so well,
And feared, since thou didst worship his sad
face.

O Senta, didst thou give him thy fair hand
Before he scarce had passed across thy thresh-
old !"

She cried: "No more! Be still! I must! God
wills!"

Scornful he spake: "Oh, blind obedience!
Oh, heartless welcome of a father's whim!
Oh, cruel blow that crushes my poor heart!"
Again she cried: "Erik, no more! no more!
I must not see nor think of thee again!

Our past is past, for higher duty calls!"
He fiercely cried: "What higher duty calls?
Is it not higher yet to keep the troth
Which thou didst swear to me in love eternal?"
Cried she: "When did I swear such vows with
thee?"

And quick he spake: "O Senta, dost deny it?
Forgettest thou that day of days for me
When in the valley thou didst call to me
To gather wild flowers from the mountain's
crest?

Fearless with thee I climbed the rocky heights

The
Troth of
Death

And plucked for thee full many a hardy bloom.
Dost thou forget how on the highest crag
We stood and watched thy father's ship depart,
A wingèd bird upon a crystal sky?
Had he not well confided to my care
The precious treasure of thy loving heart?
Didst thou not twine thine arms around my
neck

And vow with me the tender pledge of love?
Didst thou not press the hand that held thine
own?

Pray, was not that the sealing of our troth?"

Now, as they talked together earnestly,
Erik beseeching, Senta in dismay,
The Holland captain saw them from afar
And thought that they were making vows of
love,

And in a quick despair cried hopelessly :
" Forsaken once again ! All, all is lost !
Forever lost ! Lost all my hopes of Heaven !"
But when he nearer drew, Erik perceived
The stranger, and as now he looked at him, —
The gallant gentleman with the sad face,
The wistful eyes, the flowing Spanish cloak, —
The portrait on the wall alive again,
He cried : " Great God ! what do my eyes be-
hold !"

The stranger spake : " Senta, farewell ! fare-
well !"

But she, who knew not what was in his
thoughts,
Bewildered cried : " Oh, stay, unhappy heart !"
Spake Erik : " Sir, what is it thou dost mean ?"

**The
Troth of
Death**

Then with a deep and melancholy voice,
The centuries of sorrow in its tones,
He looked out to the open main and cried:
"To sea! I must put forth forevermore!
Senta, thy sacred promise is absolved!
Thy vows and my redemption are no more!
Farewell! I will not crush thee in my fate!"
Deep muttered Erik: "God, what piteous
face!"

But Senta called: "Oh, stay, unhappy heart!
From this our home thou ne'er shalt wander
more!"

The stranger bowed, but with his seaman's
whistle

Blew forth a signal that departure neared,
And to the crew upon his ship called out:
"Set all the sails! Up with the anchor there,
And bid farewell to land forevermore!"

Then Senta, as a glimmering of the truth
That caused his jealousy and dark despair
Came to her, cried in pitiful entreaty:
"Oh, dost thou doubt my faithful heart and
troth?"

Unhappy soul, what blinded thee so quickly?
Oh, stay with me! Oh, do not now forsake me!
Naught do I rue me for the solemn promise
I vowed to thee. I shall forever keep it.
Oh, stay with me! Oh, do not break my heart!"
Cried Erik in amazement and dismay:
"Great God, what do I hear, what do I see?
Can I believe my ears or trust my eyes?
Senta, art thou determined on thy ruin?
Oh, come to me, to me, O Senta dear!

Come, and escape from this accursèd web
That Satan now is weaving round thy feet !”

**The
Troth of
Death**

The Holland captain stood awhile in silence, —
For when he saw that dream of fair young love,
And what it meant, his heart at last was touched :
He will not ask this awful sacrifice.

He is an age-worn, sad, and weary man,
Life unto him is dry and desperate,
And holds but one thing welcome, — speedy
death.

Here is a woman, good and true and noble,
Far nobler than he ever thought or dreamed ;
Her pure young soul has stirred his inmost life ;
He loves her, and he will not let her die
Under his curse, and share his doom of death.
She is most faithful, sweet, and noble hearted ;
He will be gone, and let her live fair life ;
Again he will go forth and face the storms
And wander on till doomsday ends the world.
It will not be the same, for one has loved him, —
That love will sweeten all his bitter life.

Therefore he spake in words of majesty :
“ Learn the dread doom from which I wish to
save thee !

Condemned am I to suffer bitter woe !
A thousand times death were a happier lot.
From this accursèd fate none but a woman
Can loose me, who will pledge a love till death.
'T is true that thou hast given me thy promise,
Yet 't is not ratified before God's throne
By sacred oaths in solemn marriage rites.
Here is thy chance to end thy foolish words.
For know the hapless fate which comesto them

**The
Troth of
Death**

Who break the marriage-vows before high
Heaven,—
Endless damnation is their awful doom;
Victims untold have fallen 'neath this curse.
But, Senta, I would save thee from this fate,—
Farewell ! My last fond hope is fled and gone!
Ne'er for eternity shall I find rest!"

Cried Erik : "Senta, come to me, to me!
Oh, help her, God! Let her not be destroyed!"
But, with a loving and an eager look,
She gazed up at the stranger's wistful eyes,
And spake as if a spell were on her soul:
"I know thee well, and all thy direful fate!
I knew thee when I first beheld thy face!
Thy bitter sorrow now shall have an end!
'T is I whose love will bring thee thy redemp-
tion!
'T is I whose love is faithful unto death!"
And as poor Erik and the others cried:
"Help her, O God ! Or she is lost forever!"
The Holland captain wended his slow way
Down to the strand, and to his ancient ship,
With its black masts and sails as red as blood.
And standing on its deck, he seemed to grow
A larger spectral form as slow he called:
"Thou dost not know me, or believest not;
But ask the stormy seas of every coast,
Or ask the ocean's oldest mariners,—
They know this ship, the terror of good men,
For I am he men call 'The Flying Dutch-
man.'"
And at that word, many have crossed them-
selves



THE DEATH OF SENTA.

And muttered a quick prayer for Heaven's protection.

The
Troth of
Death

The wind is raising and the sails are full,
And out to sea the spectral ship slow moved,
To sail the seas of death forevermore;
The while the phantom sailors faintly sang:

“**Y**EHO! Ahoy!
Captain, captain, hast returned?
Hark, his piping,—‘Off to sea!’
Him the hoped-for bride has spurned,
Captain, no good luck for thee!

“Blow, ye storm-winds, howl and blow!
Hurrah!
What care we how fast we go!
Hurrah!
Satan fills our sails! Yeho!
Hurrah!”

Amazed they stood and listened on the strand.
Then suddenly rushed Senta to the cliff,
And as they cried in dread and consternation:
“Senta, O Senta! what art thou doing there?”
She raised her eyes to Heaven with the words:
“Praise to the angel that hath chosen me!
Praise to the sweet command of sacrifice!
My life is naught, unless thou be redeemed.
Here stand I, faithful to my promised love!
Here stand I, faithful to thee unto death!”
She spake, and flung herself into the sea.
The people looked—no phantom ship was
there,—
Naught but a whirling eddy on the sea.

**The
Troth of
Death**

All in a moment black hull, blood-red sails,
The crew, and captain hid beneath the wave.
The billows rose and tossed in angry glee,
Then backward fell in rushing whirl of foam,
Like one deep sob. And all was still as death.

Thus came her marriage day and coronation
In a great deed of utter sacrifice.
Her martyr-spirit thrall'd by one desire,
Stirred by deep pity to the fiercest passion,
She longed to do and die for love's sweet grace.
Feeling her father's will and God's demand
Upon her soul, she answered love's deep call;
She made her altar the wide shimmering sea
In splendor of a holy sacrifice,
To save a sin-curst soul shut out from
Heaven.

Some say that in the brightening eastern sky,
Within the faint dawn of the sunrise light,
Above the ocean wave where sank the ship,
They saw a vision of two radiant forms
Embracing in a fond eternal love,
And floating up into the open Heaven.

THE END

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